

F.A.Q—Assembly Bill 758 (Skinner)

Energy Efficiency: Equity, Jobs and Green Buildings

WHAT DOES AB 758 DO?

AB 758 would require the California Energy Commission to develop and implement a comprehensive program to achieve greater energy savings in *existing* residential and commercial buildings. The program may include energy audits, energy efficiency improvements, financing options, and green workforce training. It also requires the California Public Utilities Commission and publicly-owned utilities to implement energy efficiency programs consistent with the Legislature's intent to encourage energy savings and greenhouse gas reductions

California has long been a leader in energy efficiency, but to meet our future goals for affordable, clean and reliable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we need AB 758 to ensure our aging residential and commercial building stock is as efficient as our new construction

WHY IS AB 758 NECESSARY?

- **GHG**—Buildings are the largest single contributor to global warming in the United States, accounting for 40% of all greenhouse gas emissions nationally.
- **Saves Consumers Money**—According to the California Energy Commission's (CEC) 2005 report "Energy Efficiency in Existing Buildings," they project that electricity can be reduced 9% and natural gas 6% through cost effective measures which translates to \$4.5 billion dollars in consumer savings.
- **Underinvestment in Efficiency**— Currently 72% of California's 13 million residential buildings and over 5 billion square feet of commercial structures were built before the implementation of California's energy efficiency building code (Title 24) in the early 1980's. This means that 3 out of 4 homes in California have never had to comply with any energy efficiency requirements whatsoever. While Title 24 has improved building efficiency by more than 50%, these technologies have not been applied to existing buildings in a comprehensive manner.
- **Job Creation**—For every \$1 billion invested in a coal power plant 870 jobs are created. Every \$1 billion invested in solar photovoltaic would create 1,500 jobs. But if that same amount of money were invested in building retrofits it would lead to 6,700 jobs.

WILL AB 758 HELP THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN CALIFORNIA REBOUND?

Yes, over the last year 1 in 5 California workers who have lost their job came from the construction sector meaning many of the workers needed to retrofit and remodel homes, apartments and office buildings will be put back to work and will need little or no training.

HOW MUCH ENERGY SAVINGS WOULD OCCUR WITH AB 758?

Implementing the California Energy Commission's recommended cost effective measures as intended by AB 758 would be equivalent of removing over 3 million cars from the road for one year.

WHO SUPPORTS AB 758?

This bill has a large and disparate group of supporters made up of environmental groups, builders, utilities, health care advocates and business.

Supporters include:

Global Green USA

American Lung Association of California

Breathe California

California Association of Realtors

California Business Properties Association

Dow Chemical

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Environmental Defense Fund

Environmental Health Coalition

Planning and Conservation League

San Diego Coastkeeper

Sierra Club California

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The Utility Reform Network

Union of Concerned Scientists

US Green Building Council (Northern California and Los Angeles)

DID YOU KNOW...

- Single-family homes built before 1960 constitute 37% of GHG emissions, those built before the 1970s contribute 20%, and those built during the 2000s only contribute about 8% of GHG emissions.¹
- Based on analysis by the California Energy Commission, if cost-effective energy efficiency measures were applied to existing buildings there would be significant savings of 9% of statewide electricity consumption, 11% of peak demand, and 5% of natural gas consumption. This amounts to approximately a \$4.5 billion savings in energy costs.
- In California 69% of electricity usage and 37% of California's overall energy usage are attributed to the residential and commercial building sectors, with consumption in these areas projected to continue to increase in coming years. AB 758 is a sensible approach to slowing the trend of increased energy consumption by the building sector.
- In California 31% of electricity is used in housing, and 28% of GHG emissions are attributable to the energy used for residential and commercial buildings. Of these 28%, existing housing constitutes 99% of the GHG emissions.²
- Both the Energy Commission, in its 2007 Energy Report, and the Air Resources Board, in its AB 32 Scoping Plan, have recognized the untapped potential of existing buildings for energy savings and greenhouse gas reductions and called for improved energy efficiency.

¹ http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/asm/ab_0751-0800/ab_758_cfa_20090417_083234_asm_comm.html

² http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/asm/ab_0751-0800/ab_758_cfa_20090417_083234_asm_comm.html